

the war in Iraq. Otherwise our national agenda will continue to be held captive in Iraq.

The Bible says, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free". The truth is, Iraq had nothing to do with 9/11, did not have weapons of mass destruction. The truth is that in the name of fighting terrorism, we are creating more terrorists.

"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free." We must free ourselves from this war. We must reconcile with those who wrongly took us into Iraq. We must seek the truth.

FISCAL DISCIPLINE IS DRIVING DOWN THE DEFICIT

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, House Republicans have been working hard to exercise fiscal restraint and keep taxes low. These pro-growth policies are not only helping our economy grow at a fiery pace, they are helping drive down the Federal budget deficit as well.

This past Tuesday, the Wall Street Journal published a story I would like to quote. "Surging individual and corporate income tax receipts in May continued to help the Federal Government shrink the budget deficit to \$227 billion for the first eight months of the fiscal year, down 16.6 percent from the same period a year earlier. To date, much of the deficit reduction stems from taxes being paid by corporations, which are seeing increased profits, and from high-income individuals, who are paying taxes on capital gains."

Mr. Speaker, fiscal restraint and tax relief is boosting the economy and increasing tax revenues. The Treasury Department predicts that if these Republican-led trends continue, we will cut the Federal deficit in half well before President Bush's goal of 2009.

BOGUS RESOLUTION ON IRAQ

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, Republican leaders say that this unamendable, nonbinding, purely oratory resolution crafted behind closed doors is a referendum on the war on terror. And it is, but not in the way they characterize it.

It is a blanket endorsement of the failed policies, of the diversion of troops and resources from Afghanistan, and the effort to eradicate the Taliban, al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden. Remember him, the leader of the 9/11 plot? We have not heard much about Osama bin Laden. He is still out there.

It is about the redirection of the bulk of our military intelligence efforts to an unnecessary, preemptive war against the bloody, loathsome dictator who did not have weapons of mass destruction, was not involved in 9/11, was contained, and no direct threat to the United States.

Secretary Rumsfeld, Vice President CHENEY said we would be in and out of Iraq in 90 days. Three years, 3 months later, 2,500 dead, we are still there in the middle of a civil war.

A vote for this resolution is a vote to stay the course, unconditionally, indefinitely in Iraq, and leave our troops in the middle of that war. You should not support it. If you want to lead our troops out of the middle of a civil war in Iraq, redeploy and redirect these efforts to a more productive use of our Nation's resources and put an end to al Qaeda and the Taliban once and for all.

VICTORY IN IRAQ

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today is another significant day in the global war on terrorism, as the House will adopt the resolution supporting our troops to achieve victory over terrorism, to protect American families.

I know firsthand of the capabilities and competence of our troops, as a veteran with 31 years, service with the Army Reserves and National Guard. As a member of the Armed Services Committee, I have visited our troops eight times in Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan. I know especially firsthand of the progress from my oldest son, who served with the National Guard for a year in Iraq, and this year I will have four sons in the military keeping me informed.

Today we can join with the Senate's 93-6 vote for success in Iraq, and I urge my colleagues to put aside partisanship to stand with our troops promoting freedom.

I want to especially commend Chairman HENRY HYDE for the clarity and vision of the resolution. As cochairman of the Victory in Iraq Caucus, I believe our choice is to defeat terrorism overseas, or we will face them again on the streets of America.

The only way to achieve peace is through victory. In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

CONSOLIDATION OF STUDENT LOANS

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, the Republican leadership is doing nothing to help with rising college education costs. The average cost for 4 years in college at a State university is now over \$40,000, and the cost to attend a private university now tops \$107,000.

These massive costs are far too much for many families to cover. Republicans have limited the availability of student aid, and both students and their parents are forced to take on huge loans in order to earn their college degree.

In fact, the average college senior is graduating this year with more than \$17,000 in student debt. Another problem looms for them, however, if they do not consolidate their loans before July 1st. That is when interest rates will nearly double on their Federal student loans.

Mr. Speaker, to avoid dramatic hikes in interest rates and to lock in rates as low as 4.75 percent, I strongly encourage students and graduates to consolidate their Federal loan payments before July 1. Consolidating your loans could save you thousands of dollars over the next decade.

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SUPPORT OUR TROOPS AND THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of visiting our troops in Iraq last month. I asked General Casey, the commander of our troops, how the political carping in Washington affected the troops. He responded, It doesn't really affect the troops so much, but it really grates on their families back home.

During Vietnam, I will never forget, as a young Air Force officer flying combat, how much we despised the politicians in Washington who were undermining the war effort. We visited the Iraqi leaders and Prime Minister al Maliki said, Welcome to a free and democratic Iraq. He said, Please tell the American people of our deep gratitude for the sacrifices that your sons and daughters have made to give us our freedom. He said, Please finish the job. Don't abandon us. Don't go backward.

Mr. Speaker, I don't question the patriotism of our opponents in this manner, just their judgment. The cause of freedom is too important to quit. The world and the terrorists are watching. Let's not lose our resolve.

GLOBAL WAR NOT WORTH THE COST

(Mr. MORAN of Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, the full day's debate yesterday was of no consequence because the premise of the resolution before us is a false one. It suggests that the goal of a secure, stable, and unified Iraq is an achievable one. It is not.

Iraq has always been a failed state because it was created artificially by the British to serve the British interest, not the Iraqi's interest. The fact is, when you have no tradition of civil institutions at the local level, the only way that a country can be governed is by a brutal secular dictator or by a repressive religious theocracy, and neither of those options is going to be in

America's interest, certainly not the pro-American liberal democracy that we have talked about.

Neither of those options, most importantly, will be worth the cost of the thousands more of American men and women who will lose their lives, the tens of thousands who will be seriously wounded or the hundreds of billions of dollars that we will have to borrow to finance this war. This resolution is not in America's interest, and it should be defeated.

HONORING MATT MAUPIN

(Mrs. SCHMIDT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Mr. Speaker, as we focus on the global war on terror, I am reminded of the brave actions of our military, including Matt Maupin, the only soldier missing and captured in Iraq on April 9, 2004.

Matt and his family live in my district. His parents, Keith and Carolyn Maupin, continue to support our military through their yellow ribbon campaign, sending literally thousands of boxes of food and other items to Iraq and Afghanistan for our brave men and women.

Please continue to pray for Matt and all who are fighting for us.

DECLARING THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL PREVAIL IN THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 868, proceedings will now resume on the resolution (H. Res. 861) declaring that the United States will prevail in the Global War on Terror, the struggle to protect freedom from the terrorist adversary.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. When proceedings were postponed on Thursday, June 15, 2006, 61 minutes of debate remained on the resolution.

The Committee on International Relations has 2 minutes remaining, the Committee on Armed Services has 5½ minutes remaining, the Committee on the Judiciary has 23 minutes remaining, and the minority leader's designee has 30½ minutes remaining.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield the remainder of our time to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GERLACH) with whom I had the honor of visiting our troops in Afghanistan and Iraq, the front line of the war on terror.

Mr. GERLACH. I thank the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. Speaker, I think most of us understand we must succeed in Iraq if we are to win this global war on terror. Like any war, we may not want to be there, but now we must successfully complete the task before us.

It is not and will not be easy. But as one said, there is no substitute for victory. We must prevail. But at the same

time, we also need to make it undeniably clear to the Iraqi Government that our patience and support are not blank checks that can be cashed with American lives and tax dollars ad infinitum.

To do that properly and effectively, it is imperative that the Congress do its job to proactively and comprehensively evaluate the current level of progress of the Iraqi Government and clearly report its findings on an ongoing basis to the American people.

By doing so, we would be firmly pushing the Iraqis themselves to continue their efforts to stand up and take charge of their destiny. The American people are looking to us to answer their questions on how much progress is being made, what are the Iraqis themselves willing to do to fight for their freedom, and when will the men and women come home.

For this very reason, I recently introduced a resolution calling on certain House and Senate committees to evaluate and issue specific findings and conclusions on the progress of the Iraqi Government to take over operational control to maintain proper civil order, to foster economic growth and self-sufficiency and preserve the Iraqi people's freedoms as set forth in their Constitution.

It is my firm belief that if this fact-finding and reporting process is undertaken, it will set the stage for further evaluation and consensus-building both inside and outside of Congress on our role in Iraq and will go a long way to ensure that our future involvement there continues to be the right policy, both for Iraq and America.

Mr. MURTHA. I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON).

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Armed Services Committee, through the years I have had the opportunity to visit and watch those in uniform as they trained, as they sailed aboard ship. I have visited with them in difficult places through the years, most recently in Iraq and Afghanistan. I must tell you how immensely proud I am of those young men and young women who wear the uniform of the United States.

We asked for a debate on the issue of Iraq. We were led to believe that we would be debating and discussing at length the issue of Iraq. Then the resolution was put forward for us, which we are discussing today, which is a shotgun blast all across the Middle East and its problems and terrorism, and a footnote is Iran.

So we should be discussing the future of our young people as they proceed in Iraq, not everywhere else, because the issue we thought was before us was that. I must tell you that I take a back seat to no one in providing for the troops, the young people in uniform and their families, because their families are so very, very important. Having members of my family in uniform, I understand the importance thereof.

Sadly, this is not about Iraq. Last year this Congress drafted, and the President signed into law, words that said calendar year 2006 should be a period of significant transition to full Iraqi sovereignty, with Iraqi security forces taking the lead for the security of a free and sovereign Iraq, thereby creating the conditions for the phased redeployment of United States forces from Iraq.

That is what we should be discussing. It should be narrow, intellectual discussion, a serious discussion about that country and its future, full sovereignty transition to their government and how it is being stood up, how their security forces and Iraqi police forces are being stood up, and how we are training them and also creating conditions for the phased redeployment of American forces from that country.

That is the law of the land, signed by the President, passed by this Congress. That is in conflict with the resolution before us. As we say back home, they have done gee and haw together very well. But the law of the land is what we should be discussing today and all the parts thereof.

But what concerns me most of all is at the end of the day, what about the future of our military? Our forces will come out of this effort seriously strained, both in personnel and in equipment. The equipment in Iraq is wearing out two to nine times the peace time rate. Some equipment has added as much as 27 years' worth of wear and tear in the last 3 years in Iraq. We must continue to fund defense requirements to meet unpredictable future security needs.

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, after I recognize the distinguished gentleman from Virginia, I ask unanimous consent that the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN), who sits on the Judiciary Committee, be allowed to control the remaining time on our side.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, I am now pleased to recognize for 3 minutes the distinguished gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) who chairs the House Agriculture Committee and who sits on the House Judiciary Committee.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, just over 3 years ago the world watched as a treacherous tyrant disregarded United Nations resolutions and burrowed into the bunkers of Baghdad. Within a short period of time, coalition forces dismantled Saddam Hussein's regime, which was built on fear, murders, assassinations, torture and lies. And today this despotic dictator stands on trial before the Iraqi people in a courtroom that is a stone's throw from his prison cell.

While insurgents and terrorists continue their attempts to dismantle the progress that the Iraqi people have made, our resolution to see a free Iraq